ideas, and matters of fact, are once taken in, they lie by for uſe, till ſome fortuitous circumſtance makes the information dart into the mind with illuſtrative force, that has been received at very different periods of our lives. Like the lightning's flaſh are many recollections; one idea aſſimilating and explaining another, with aſtoniſhing rapidity. I do not now allude to that quick perception of truth, which is ſo intuitive that it baffles reſearch, and makes us at a loſs to determine whether it is reminiſcence or ratiocination, loſt ſight of in its celerity, that opens the dark cloud. Over thoſe inſtantaneous aſſociations we have little power; for when the mind is once enlarged by excurſive flights, or profound reflection, the raw materials will, in ſome degree, arrange themſelves. The underſtanding, it is true, may keep us from going out of drawing when we group our thoughts, or tranſcribe from the imagination the warm ſketches of fancy; but the animal ſpirits, the individual character, give the colouring. Over this ſubtile electric fluid *, how little power

* I have ſometimes, when inclined to laugh at materialiſts, aſked whether, as the moſt powerful effects in nature

power do we poſſeſs, and over it how little power can reaſon obtain! Theſe fine intractable ſpirits appear to be the eſſence of genius, and beaming in its eagle eye, produce in the moſt eminent degree the happy energy of aſſociating thoughts that ſurpriſe, delight, and inſtruct. Theſe are the glowing minds that concentrate pictures for their fellow-creatures; forcing them to view with intereſt the objects reflected from the impaſſioned imagination, which they paſſed over in nature.

I muſt be allowed to explain myſelf. The generality of people cannot ſee or feel poetically, they want fancy, and therefore fly from ſolitude in ſearch of ſenſible objects; but when an author lends them his eyes they can ſee as he ſaw, and be amuſed by images they could not ſelect, though lying before them.

Education thus only ſupplies the man of genius with knowledge to give variety and

nature are apparently produced by fluids, the magnetic, &c. the paſſions might not be fine volatile fluids that embraced humanity, keeping the more refractory elementary parts together—or whether they were ſimply a liquid fire that pervaded the more ſluggiſh materials, giving them life and heat?